

Document No.: AK-040-06-DNA-034

Case File: AA-080604



Bureau of Land Management

Anchorage Field Office

6881 Abbott Loop Road

Anchorage, AK 99507

<http://www.anchorage.ak.blm.gov>

Administrative Determination (AD)/Documentation of NEPA Adequacy (DNA)

Applicant: Alaska Communications Systems Internet, Inc.

Case File No.: AA-080604

AK-040-06-AD/DNA-034

Location:

NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 10 and NW $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 11, T. 14 N., R. 2 W.,
Seward Meridian, Alaska

Prepared By:

Dorothy Bonds

Realty Specialist

April 27, 2006

Administrative Determination (AD)
Documentation of Land Use Plan Conformance and NEPA Adequacy (DNA)
U.S. Department of the Interior - Bureau of Land Management
Anchorage Field Office

A. BLM Office: Anchorage Field Office **Lease/Serial Case File No.:** AA-080604

Proposed Action Title/Type: ROW Assignment from Alaska Fiber Star, LLC (AFS) to Alaska Communications Systems (ACS)

Location of Proposed Action:

The location of the proposed action is on public lands withdrawn for the use of the military by Executive Order 8102 and Public Land Order (PLO) 2676. The Bureau of Land Management is responsible for permitting third party uses under PLO 2676. The project area is the same as the original ROW area, issued under ROW grant AA-080604 dated October 21, 1997.

The ROW area is located within the NE $\frac{1}{4}$, Sec. 10 and NW $\frac{1}{4}$, Sec 11, T. 14 North, Range 2 West, Seward Meridian.

Description of the Proposed Action

The Proposed Action has two components that affect existing Right-of-Way (ROW) AA-080604. The first component is to assign the ROW grant from Alaska Fiber Star, LLC (AFS) to Alaska Communications Systems (ACS). New construction will not be necessary for this ROW assignment. All interests held by AFS, will be assigned to ACS and ACS must agree to comply with and be bound by all the terms and conditions of the original agreement. The grant will not terminate until October 20, 2027, at which time it can be renewed by ACS.

The second component is to amend the width of the ROW. ACS has requested to amend the row width due to insufficient width for maintenance purposes. The width will increase from 1 foot to 15 feet wide. The length of the ROW will remain at 1.5 miles long. Instead of occupying .18 acres of public lands, the amended ROW will occupy approximately 2.72 acres of public land.

Under the original ROW grant, AFS received the right to construct, operate, maintain and terminate a buried fiber optic line on public lands located along the south shoulder of the Artillery Road on Fort Richardson Military Reservation. The underground cable is a buried fiber optic cable encased in 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ inch conduit. During construction a 6 inches wide trench was dug at a depth of 48 inches where the line was buried. This fiber optic cable provides communications network link between Anchorage and Fairbanks, plus connects to Matanuska Telephone Association lines and Eagle River.

Applicant (if any):

Alaska Communications Systems
600 Telephone Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99503-6091

B. Conformance with the Land Use Plan (LUP) and Consistency with Related Subordinate Implementation Plans:

The Proposed Action has been reviewed and found to be in compliance with the Southcentral Management Framework Plan (MFP), March 1980. Objective Number L-1 of the MFP states the BLM intends to “Satisfy state and local government needs as well as public and/or private demonstrated needs for land as they arise.”

C. Identify applicable NEPA documents and other related documents that cover the Proposed Action.

Environmental Assessment (EA) AK-040-98-001.

D. NEPA Adequacy Criteria

1. Is the current Proposed Action substantially the same action (or is a part of that action) as previously analyzed? Is the current Proposed Action located at a site specifically analyzed in an existing document?

Yes, the proposed action is basically the same action that has been previously analyzed in Environmental Assessment AK-040-98-001. This proposed action consists of a buried fiber optic cable considered and analyzed in EA AK-040-98-001. In this proposed action the width is amended due to insufficient width for maintenance purposes. The location of the cable line will remain the same with no additional impacts to the previously analyzed area.

2. Is the range of alternatives analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s) appropriate with respect to the current Proposed Action, given current environmental concerns, interests, and resource values?

Yes, the range of alternatives is appropriate given the limited scope of the proposal. The area where the proposed action exists is already developed land. No new land clearing or construction will occur on site. The buried cable line is within the area original constructed adjacent to the Artillery Road on Fort Richardson military reserve.

3. Is the existing analysis valid in light of any new information or circumstances?

Yes, the existing analysis is still valid. The underground fiber optic cable remains the same as the original. However, the width of the ROW surface has changed due to insufficient width for maintenance purposes. The width will increase from 1 foot to 15 feet wide. The length of the ROW will remain at 1.5 miles long.

Instead of occupying .18 acres of public lands, the amended ROW will occupy approximately 2.72 acres of public land.

- 4. Do the methodology and analytical approach used in the existing NEPA document(s) continue to be appropriate for the current Proposed Action?**
Yes, the methodology and analytical approach is still valid. The ROW area changed to accommodate ACS request for maintenance purposes, however, no new construction or clearing is needed for this purpose.
- 5. Are the direct and indirect impacts of the current Proposed Action substantially unchanged from those identified in the existing NEPA document(s)? Does the existing NEPA document analyze site-specific impacts related to the current Proposed Action?**
Yes, the direct and indirect impacts of the current Proposed Action are substantially unchanged from those identified in the existing NEPA document. All of the types of activities being proposed were analyzed in 1997, namely constructing an underground fiber optic cable encased in 1¼ inch conduit consisting of a 6 inches wide trench dug at a depth of 48 inches. All that has changed is amending the width from 1 foot to 15 to allow ACS more space for maintenance of the already developed area, which has been previously discussed. No additional direct or indirect impacts have been identified for the Proposed Action.
- 6. Are the cumulative impacts that would result from implementation of the current Proposed Action substantially unchanged from those analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s)?**
Yes, the cumulative impacts that would result from implementation of the current Proposed Action are substantially unchanged from those analyzed in the existing NEPA document. The entire ROW area has been developed since 1997. The areas that are undeveloped which are vegetated buffer areas will not be impacted by this action.
- 7. Are the public involvement and interagency review associated with existing NEPA document(s) adequate for the current Proposed Action?**
Yes, the public involvement and interagency review associated with existing NEPA document is adequate for the current Proposed Action. Since this is in an area that has previously been developed no extensive interagency review was conducted. The necessary staffs from the Corps of Engineers and Fort Richardson have been informed of this assignment.

E. Interdisciplinary Analysis:
Jeff Denton, Subsistence Biologist
Dorothy Bonds, Realty Specialist

Donna Redding, Archaeologist
Bruce Seppi, Wildlife Biologist

F. Mitigation Measures:

When maintenance occurs on the line, to minimize introduction of invasive non-native plant species, equipment used to maintain the buried line or other materials brought on-site should be free of weed sources. Disturbed sites should be monitored to determine if non-native species become established. If these species are found, they should be removed.

G. Conclusion

The Proposed Action has been found to be in compliance with the Southcentral Management Framework Plan (MFP), March 1980. Objective Number L-1 of the MFP states the BLM intends to “Satisfy state and local government needs as well as public and/or private demonstrated needs for land as they arise.” Environmental Assessment AK-040-98-001, analyzed the impacts of this type of action in accordance with 43 CFR 1610.8(b)(1). Therefore, based on the review documented above, I conclude that this proposal is in accordance with federal regulations and that the NEPA documentation fully covers the Proposed Action and constitutes BLM’s compliance with the requirements of NEPA.

Mike Zaidlicz
Anchorage Field Manager

June 5, 2006